

lockbox to lock in every penny of the Social Security surplus exclusively for Americans' retirement. Unfortunately, opposition by the other side has blocked the establishment of this safe lockbox. Some opposed because Medicare was not included. My proposal does protect Medicare.

The "look-back" mechanism in my legislation is our best option. It will force the Government to live up to our pledge that not a penny of the Social Security and Medicare surpluses will be spent to fund either last year's or this year's appropriations.

If our spending plans do pass and we would again, unintentionally wind up spending Social Security, we must be able to keep our commitment to the American people, by scaling back other spending to save Social Security. Without this mechanism Congress and the President may spend some of the Social Security surplus by using inaccurate estimates.

The remedy in my bill is a simple one and it should be passed early before we face a problem, so we cannot play the blame game if a re-estimate shows spending of Social Security or Medicare surpluses.

In an era of budget surplus, extra prudence and effort is needed to keep ourselves from spending more than we can afford. On principle, we must do everything we can to ensure Washington will not touch any Social Security money.

Protecting the Social Security and Medicare surpluses from funding government operations is the last defense of fiscal discipline. I cannot emphasize how vitally important this line of defense is for both political parties because if we lose this defense, our credibility and accountability with the American people will be gone.

I strongly believe we should continue to stress our promise to the American people. We must make protection of the Social Security and Medicare surpluses our top priority and ensure that not a penny of Americans' retirement needs is used for Government spending.

Again, I believe this can be easily achieved by passing my "look-back" legislation which will allow us to enforce that commitment.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we have worked this afternoon to try to come up with something that is fair and reasonable. I think we have done that. With this agreement, we should be able to complete the bankruptcy legislation that has been pending for some time now.

Mr. GRAMS. I thank the Senator.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 625

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture

vote with respect to S. 625 be vitiated and, further, that order No. 109 be modified by the following:

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes consideration of S. 625, the following be the only amendments in order and they be considered under the limitations as stated, with any debate times equally divided in the usual form, and the ability to withdraw any of the amendments be in order for the author of the amendment without further consent:

Wellstone amendment No. 2537, life-line accounts; Wellstone amendment No. 2538, debt collection; Craig amendment No. 2651, pawnshops, 15 minutes; Levin amendment No. 2658, gun manufacturers, 120 minutes; Feingold amendment No. 2747, arbitration, 60 minutes; Feingold amendment No. 2748, evictions, be modified to reflect the text of 2779, and there be 30 minutes for debate on amendment number 2748; Feingold amendment No. 2667, East Timor, as modified to reflect the sense of the Senate, 60 minutes; Reed-Sessions correction of amendment No. 2650, 10 minutes; Schumer amendment No. 2762, safe harbor, 15 minutes; Schumer amendment No. 2763, clinic violence, 40 minutes; an amendment by the majority leader or his designee regarding debts incurred by violence, 40 minutes; Harkin amendment No. 2770, household liens, 20 minutes; Sarbanes amendment No. 2517, as modified, consumer credit disclosure; and one amendment to be agreed to by both managers.

I also ask consent that any other pending amendment not mentioned above be withdrawn, and further that no motions to commit or recommit be in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAMS. Finally, I ask consent that following the disposition of the above amendments, the bill be read a third time, the Senate then proceed to the House companion measure, H.R. 833, all after the enacting clause be stricken, and the text of S. 625 be inserted in lieu thereof, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of H.R. 833, as amended. I further ask consent that following the vote the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the bill, S. 625, be placed back on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATIONS RETURNED TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the following nominations be returned to the President. I now send that list of nominations to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The list of nominations is received.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The list is as follows:

Air National Guard Colonel James V. Dugar, PN-203

Air National Guard Colonel Van P. Williams, PN-389

Air Force Reserve Colonel Jerry D. Willoughby, PN-526

Army Major General Charles Mahan, PN-292

Army Reserve Brigadier General Bruce B. Bingham, PN-655

Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade Craig Leaphart, PN-280-2

Navy Lieutenant Commander Bradley S. Russell, PN-350-2

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces the following appointment made by the President pro tempore during the sine die adjournment:

Pursuant to provisions of Public Law 106-79, on behalf of the President pro tempore, after consultation with the majority and minority leaders, the appointment of the following Senators to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission: the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The Chair announces the following appointment made by the Democratic leader, the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE), during the sine die adjournment:

Pursuant to provisions of Public Law 105-277, on behalf of the Democratic leader, who consulted with the minority leader of the House, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the International Financial Institution Advisory Commission: C. Fred Bergsten, of Virginia, vice Paul A. Volcker, of New York, resigned.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.J. RES. 84

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, there is a joint resolution at the desk which was received earlier from the House of Representatives. I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 84) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.

Mr. GRAMS. I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the rule, the bill will be read on the next legislative day.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 376

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate withdraw its request of November 19, 1999, for a conference on S. 376, and agree to the conference, with the same conferees previously appointed by the Senate, requested by the House of Representatives on November 10, 1999, which message was transmitted to the Senate on January 24, 2000.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.